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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/622,082	07/17/2003	Karen L. Boso	11492/288	1846
757	7590	08/20/2004	EXAMINER	
BRINKS HOFER GILSON & LIONE P.O. BOX 10395 CHICAGO, IL 60610			LUU, TUYET PHUONG PHAM	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3673	

DATE MAILED: 08/20/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/622,082

Applicant(s)

BOSO ET AL.

Examiner

Teri P. Luu

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 July 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-43 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5, 17-20, 33-35, 40 and 41 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 6-16, 21-32, 36-39, 42 and 43 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 17 July 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 12/22/03.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

The claims contain three claims numbered "38". The second and third claims have been renumbered 39 and 40, respectively and claims 30-41 have been renumbered, 41-43 respectively.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1-5, 17-20, 33, 40 and 41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0107503 to Tu.

With respect to claim 1, Tu discloses an inflatable support system having at least two sections (29, 30), said system comprising a lower chamber (30) comprised of a top and bottom layer, and an upper portion comprising a top and bottom layer in fluid communication with said lower chamber. Upper cloth (27) forms the top and bottom layer of the upper portion. Lower cloth (28) forms the top and bottom layer of the lower chamber. The cloths are made of PU material (or the like) having different softness and thickness. Accordingly, the cloths inherently have different elasticity.

As concerns claim 3, a pump (34) is removably connected to the inflatable support system.

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As concerns claim 4, the inflatable support system includes a first and second intake tube, including first (31) and second valves (32) for inflating and deflating the inflatable support.

As concerns claim 5, a user can adjust pressure within the inflatable support via a throttle valve (31) and exhaust valve (32).

With respect to claim 17, Tu discloses an inflatable support system comprising an upper portion (29) at least partially defined by at least a first layer (27) having a first elasticity and a lower chamber in fluid communication with the upper portion, said lower chamber at least partially defined by at least a second layer (28) having a second elasticity lower than said first elasticity.

As concerns claim 18, the first layer of the upper portion is a top layer of the upper portion.

As concerns claims 19 and 20, the upper portion further comprises a bottom layer of material (28) wherein the second layer of material is the bottom layer of the upper portion and the top layer of the lower chamber.

With respect to claim 33, Tu discloses an inflatable support system comprising an upper portion (29) defined by a plurality of flexible panels (each cloth 27), at least some of said panels of said upper portion having a first elasticity; and a lower chamber (30) defined by a plurality of flexible panels (each cloth 28), at least some of said panels of said lower chamber having a second elasticity less than said first elasticity.

With respect to claim 40, Tu discloses a method of supporting a user, the method comprising the steps of: providing an air mattress defining at least two fluidly connected air chambers (29, 30). The air chambers are defined by an upper cloth (27) forming an upper

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chamber (29) and a lower cloth (28) forming the lower chamber. The cloths are made of PU material (or the like) having different softness and thickness. Accordingly, the cloths inherently have different elasticity.

As concerns claim 41, a pump (34) is connected to at least one of the chambers wherein the chambers are inflated using the pump.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 2, 34 and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tu.

Tu discloses the claimed invention except for the upper portion and lower chamber being formed from PVC material. However, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to substitute PVC for the PU, since it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice. *In re Leshin*, 125 USPQ 416.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 6-16, 21-32, 36-39, 42 and 43 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to **Teri Pham Luu** whose telephone number is **(703) 305-7421**. The examiner can be best reached Monday-Friday from 6:30 am to 2:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, **Heather Shackelford**, can be reached at **(703) 308-2978**.

Submission of your response by facsimile transmission is encouraged. Technology Center 3600's facsimile number for all official papers is **(703) 872-9306**. Recognizing the fact that reducing cycle time in the processing and examination of patent applications will effectively increase a patent's term, it is to your benefit to submit responses by facsimile transmission whenever permissible. Such submission will place the response directly in our examining group's hands and will eliminate Post Office processing and delivery time as well as the PTO's mail room processing and delivery time. For a complete list of correspondence not permitted by facsimile transmission, see MPEP § 502.01. In general, most responses and/or amendments not requiring a fee, as well as those requiring a fee but charging such fee to a deposit account, can be submitted by facsimile transmission. Responses requiring a fee which applicant is paying by check should not be submitted by facsimile transmission separately from the check.

Responses submitted by facsimile transmission should include a Certificate of Transmission (MPEP § 512). The following is an example of the format the certification might take:

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the
Patent and Trademark Office (Fax No. _____) on (Date) _____

(Typed or printed name of person signing this certificate)

(Signature)

If your response is submitted by facsimile transmission, you are hereby reminded that the original should be retained as evidence of authenticity (37 CFR 1.4 and MPEP § 502.02). Please do not separately mail the original or another copy unless required by the Patent and Trademark

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Office. Submission of the original response or a follow-up copy of the response after your response has been transmitted by facsimile will only cause further unnecessary delays in the processing of your application; duplicate responses where fees are charged to a deposit account may result in those fees being charged twice.

Communications via Internet e-mail regarding this application, other than those under 35 U.S.C. 132 or which otherwise require a signature, may be used by the applicant and should be directed to **heather.shackelford@uspto.gov**.

All Internet e-mail communications will be made of record in the application file. PTO employees do not engage in Internet communications where there exists a possibility that sensitive information could be identified or exchanged unless the record includes a properly signed expressed waiver of the confidentiality requirements of 35 U.S.C. 122. This is more clearly set forth in the Interim Internet Usage Policy published in the Official Gazette of the Patent and Trademark on February 25, 1997 at 1195 OG 89.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Teri Pham Luu
Primary Examiner

tpl
August 17, 2004